

**“The Earth on Turtle’s Back”** (Onondaga)  
**“When Grizzlies Walked Upright”** (Modoc)  
**from The Navajo Origin Legend** (Navajo)  
**from The Iroquois Constitution** (Iroquois)  
**Literary Analysis: Origin Myths**

**Origin myths** are traditional stories that recount the origins of earthly life. Passed down from generation to generation, these myths often explain such phenomena as the beginning of human life, the customs and religious rites of a people, the creation of natural landmarks, and events beyond a people’s control.

**DIRECTIONS:** Complete the chart below by explaining in the right column how each phenomenon in the left column came into being. Review each selection for help.

Selection and Phenomenon	Explanation
“The Earth on Turtle’s Back”:  the world	
“When Grizzlies Walked Upright”:  Mount Shasta, beaver, otter, fish, birds, grizzly bears	
from <i>The Navajo Origin Legend</i> :  man, woman	